

SPARK: The Electrician's Expo
September 26 – 28, 2025 | Phoenix, AZ

Phoenix Convention Center

Call for Content (CFC) Guide

Open from Thursday January 16 – Friday March 7, 2025

About SPARK

IEC SPARK is the gathering for professionals in the electrical contracting industry, bringing together contractors, suppliers, and innovators from across the nation. This annual event offers a unique blend of education, networking, and access to cutting-edge solutions, designed to empower attendees to excel in their careers and businesses.

SPARK delivers a robust lineup of educational sessions curated by industry experts, covering essential topics like emerging technologies, safety standards, business strategies, and workforce development. These sessions provide actionable insights to enhance skills and drive professional success.

The value of education at SPARK:

- **Outcome-Driven:** SPARK attendees receive actionable insights to take back and deploy fueling business and career success.
- **Community Building:** SPARK is a place where long-lasting industry connections form through shared learning experiences.

Call for Education Content

This year we are encouraging tailored sessions to address the challenges and opportunities that matter most to **electrical contractors**. We welcome submissions that:

- Feature innovative solutions - presenting cutting edge strategies that attendees can apply directly to their business or workforce.
- Offer strong business cases supported by research or data
- Showcase forward-thinking approaches and trends in the field
- Feature engaging, creative program formats
- Share real-world case studies that highlight practical applications

Each proposal should aim to provide actionable insights that empower electrical contractors and inspire meaningful progress in the industry.

Instructional Design Guidelines

Proposals should:

- Be grounded by effective learning principles

- Aim to transfer knowledge and develop new competencies
- Foster discussion, encourage active audience engagement, and be outcome-focused
- Draw upon and build on participants' prior knowledge and experiences

Attendee Audience

SPARK educational content primarily serves **electrical contractors**. Proposals should clearly specify the knowledge level and prior experience the attendee should have in the content area to ensure the session delivers maximum impact.

SPARK also offers educational content for the IEC Chapter staff community. Session submissions targeting this audience should be specified as such.

About the Review and Session Selection Process

IEC strives to be inclusive and diverse when reviewing session proposals which combines the collective input of peers, volunteer leaders, and professional staff to ensure that members of the community have significant voice in co-creating the conference programming. Together, members and staff create an educational program that is timely, relevant, and targeted to attendee needs.

All content proposals go through an initial review process when they are evaluated by IEC's Event Advisory Committee based on the rating criteria below.

Important Submission Guidelines and Speaker Expectations

- You are limited to submitting two total proposals so be thoughtful in what you submit.
- Each proposal can have a maximum of five total speakers.
- Accepted speakers **are expected to register for the conference at the discounted speaker rate** and will cover their own travel and accommodations.
- Submissions will be considered based on the quality of the session description and learning objectives, experience of the proposed speaker(s), and alignment to targeted educational topics.

Important Dates

- Call for content is open Thursday January 16 and closes Friday March 7, 2025
- Conference Session Notifications: Late April 2025

Topic Areas

As you create your proposal, please consider the following topics, which are focus areas for the conference program. While proposals may address more than one area, you may select the one which is the best fit. The example topics noted below are intended to help you develop/plan, but we welcome and encourage additional ideas.

Business Development

- Financial Foundations: Focusing on reading statements, cashflow for profit, diversify revenue, renewable energy installation, EV charging, maintenance contracts, succession planning

- Proofing your Business: Preparing for industry changes, regulatory updates and advocacy
- Succession Planning for the future of your business
- Business Growth Strategies: Expanding a team, bidding for larger projects, entering new markets
- Contract and Legal: Contract clauses, legal compliance, protecting your business
- Effective Leadership: Leading teams, managing conflicts, inspiring innovation
- Team Communication: Conflict resolution, active listening, stronger teams through communication
- Productivity: Time management, tool organization, workflow
- Project Estimating: Materials, labor costs, bid prep

Workforce Development

- Apprenticeship at your company
- Developing the future electrical pipeline: engaging with communities, local organizations, and schools
- Employee recruitment programs
- Employee development and continuing education programs
- Career Pathways: Growth within the industry and how to advance careers, certifications, career mapping, leadership development

Emerging Technology

- Integrating AI into your business
- Electric Vehicle infrastructure and renewable energy integration
- Pre-fabrication and modular construction
- Microgrids
- Digital transformation: Utilizing data, project management software, and other digital tools to drive efficiencies
- Sustainability Focus and smart buildings

Safety

- Creating a culture of risk management
- Safety training for the workforce
- OSHA regulatory and compliance updates
- Mental health awareness, suicide prevention with the construction industry
- Understanding Electrical Codes and Standards: NEC, updates and regulations
- Understanding NPFA 20, 70E, and 70B
- Mitigating risk through proper PPE
- Keeping the workforce safe: Construction Focus Four Hazards
- Ergonomics in the electrical field

IEC Chapter Staff Community

- **Member Engagement and Retention:** Strategies for chapters to keep members engaged through tactical approaches and creating community.
- **Recruitment:** Strategies for targeting and attracting apprentices effectively, strategies to retain employees
- **Financial Management:** Fundraising, sponsorship agreements, and financial reporting
- **Advocacy:** Legislative outreach, campaigning, how to advocate at a local and state level
- **Marketing and Branding:** chapter visibility in the community, social media trends
- **Building Strong Teams:** training programs, leadership development, volunteering
- **Event Planning for Chapters:** budgeting, logistics, marketing, and attracting new members
- **Technology:** CRM tools, digital platforms, and operations
- **Membership Growth:** recruiting new members, growing your chapter, merit shop voice

Additional Themes

IEC leadership has aligned with four key priorities to unite the organization and advance the merit shop electrical contracting industry. When submitting your proposal, please consider which of the following themes your content aligns with:

- Workforce Development
- Apprenticeship Program and Professional Development
- Government Affairs
- Membership

Learning Formats

Learning formats support a range of instructional methods that give attendees more control over setting priorities and choosing the right content, materials, and methods that match their learning styles and objectives. The online form will ask you to check all the session format options that your session could fit into.

- **Future Ready Forum** (30 Minutes): A TED-style talk given by 1 content leader that explores a single idea with practical tips
- **Learning Lab** (60 minutes): A formal presentation usually given by 1 or 2 content leaders.
- **Panel Discussion** (60- 90 minutes): Unscripted conversation and analysis with one moderator and 2/3 speakers with varied backgrounds
- **Debate** (45 minutes): Two experts presenting competing thesis on a topic followed by time for structure refutation

Proposal Process & Selection Criteria

The Events Advisory Committee (EAC) seeks innovative ideas and subject matter experts to deliver cutting-edge content to attendees. Proposals submitted by IEC members and individuals within the IEC community will receive priority consideration. In 2025, IEC aims to increase engagement by encouraging submissions from dedicated volunteers and active leaders within the community.

Questions

If you have any questions, please reach out at anytime

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